



THE COMMUNICATOR

Grant County Employee Newsletter

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In this quarter's issue...

Guest Columnist, Chris Carl
Protect Yourself from Ticks
County Board Chair

Limited English Proficiency
Understanding FMLA
4th of July Holiday
WOOPS! Dawn wasn't being safe.

Guest Columnist Chris Carl, County Clerk

Meet the County Clerk's Department



Chris Carl, Linda Gebhard, Kay Vincent,
Tom Schumacher and Lori Vincent



Rose Key and
John Anderson



Brenda Halverson, Bruce Clauer and
Teresa Udelhofen

The roots of the Wisconsin office of County Clerk go back to 14th century England. The office was called Clerk of the Peace and dealt with County level courts that acted legislatively as well as judicially and facilitated the work of the "Quarter Sessions", Commissioners or Supervisors. Financial duties also began clustering in this office. The modern pattern of the County Clerk's office developed after Wisconsin became a state in 1848. Election of the Clerk of the County Board of Supervisors by the electors of the County began in 1849. In 1878 the official name of the office was changed to "County Clerk".

The Clerk is the official record keeper for many basic County functions, is responsible for providing public notice of many County activities and meetings, is heavily involved in property tax administration, County financial administration, elections administration, and is the local outlet for several State functions, such as fish & game licenses and marriage licenses.

All financial reports and records are prepared in our office. We receive all the bills or claims against the County and issue the checks in payment. We issue all payroll checks for County officers and employees.

Our office works closely with local clerks and local assessors on the assessment and recording of property for property tax purposes. The State and County tax and special charges must be apportioned by our office on an equalized value basis each year for the use of the local clerks.

We prepare and distribute ballots and

perform the canvass after ballots have been returned. Upon election all County officers must file their bonds and oath of office with the County Clerk. The County Clerk advises and informs candidates for County office as to the procedure necessary to get his/her name on the ballot. The Clerk also receives and files nomination papers for County offices.

We provide the local treasurers with dog license blanks and tags and keep the record of such licenses sold or returned unsold. Dog damage claims are received by our office from local officials, investigated and recommended to the County Board for payment.

We receive applications for marriage licenses and issue the necessary license with the marriage certificate forms. The County Clerk must be versed in the law of marriage for the benefit of all concerned.

We issue fish & game licenses and must be up on the hunting rules and regulations for those concerned.

We issue cutting permits for landowners wanting to cut trees on their property.

Our department is also responsible for the maintenance, grounds and custodial work of the Courthouse and Administration building.

I have listed the principal duties of the County Clerk's office, however, buried throughout the statutes are other responsibilities which are important and must be performed. In all of this, without the working cooperation of other County departments, my job would not be possible.

Protect Yourself from Ticks

As summer comes upon us, the Grant County Health Department would like to remind you to routinely check for ticks after being outdoors. Removal of ticks before they become embedded can prevent transmission of Lyme Disease.

Deer ticks are the most common carrier of Lyme Disease in WI with the highest density in the western half of the state. Deer ticks are among the first ticks to become active in the spring and remain active until the first snow falls.

The following will help to protect you and your family from Lyme Disease:

- 1) Conduct thorough tick checks after being outdoors. Ticks wait atop grasses and other vegetation until an animal brushes against them. Then they cling to the skin, fur, or clothing. Walk in the center of mowed trails to avoid brushing against vegetation.
- 2) Wear light colored clothing so ticks are easier to see.
- 3) Tuck pants into boots or socks; wear long sleeved shirts, buttoned at the cuff.
- 4) Apply tick/insect repellent to pants, socks and shoes. Products containing 30% DEET or permethrin are very effective in repelling deer ticks. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions on the label.
- 5) Fogging or spraying an area with insecticides is not a practical means of tick control. Mowing grass around your home or out buildings may make the area unattractive to ticks.

The mouthparts of a tick are shaped like tiny barbs. The best way to remove a tick is to grasp it with a tweezers or tissue as close to the skin as possible, and gently, but firmly, pull it straight out. Then, wash the bite area and your hands with soap and water and apply an antiseptic. Do not twist or jerk the tick because the head may remain embedded and lead to infection. If the head or mouthparts do break off, consult your doctor about removing them.

Adult ticks remain on deer and other mammals through the fall and winter. If you spend a lot of time outdoors during this period, be sure to check yourself, your family, and your pets for ticks. If you hunt or trap, check areas where you catch your game for ticks that may have fallen off.

- Linda Adrian

County Board Chair

Eugene Bartels



Greetings to all!

The County started gathering information on the Smart Growth plan. The Smart Growth plan is a comprehensive plan for the county to use as a guide for future economic growth, environmental protection, and the enhancement of community vitality.

We are continuing with the Regional Jail Project. The Regional Jail Project creates a multi-county overflow jail facility. We hope to hire a planner this month so we can determine if the project is feasible.

I am still watching what's happening with the state. We hope the final budget is something we all can live with.

At the present time the County is having some sidewalks replaced around the Courthouse. J.R. Crawford has been hired to do the job.

Please let me know if you have any questions about any of these projects.

Limited English Proficiency Joyce Roling; Personnel Director

Grant County has an Equal Opportunity Policy and a Civil Rights Compliance plan for many of our departments dealing with Limited English Proficiency.

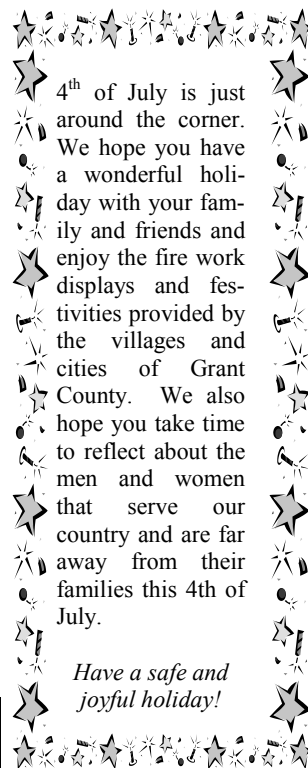
What would you do if a customer or client asked you for something in a foreign language? How would you offer them the services you provide? Find out the answers to these questions before it happens to you. Ask your supervisor what you should do.

If you use forms from the state, the state will provide you with the same forms in

several different languages. Think about who you would use for an interpreter. If you don't know, call other departments to see who they use. The need for interpreters will grow as we become a more diverse workplace. Be prepared. It would be a great idea to have a list of interpreters available with phone numbers just in case you need them.

Grant County is committed to providing equal opportunity in all programs and services to ensure full compliance with all civil rights laws.

Anyone wishing to have a specific subject discussed in a future newsletter, may contact the Grant County Personnel Department at 723-2540.



4th of July is just around the corner. We hope you have a wonderful holiday with your family and friends and enjoy the fire work displays and festivities provided by the villages and cities of Grant County. We also hope you take time to reflect about the men and women that serve our country and are far away from their families this 4th of July.

Have a safe and joyful holiday!

Understanding FMLA

Dawn Mergen; Personnel Specialist



The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was signed into law in 1993 to protect workers from losing their jobs when they need time off to address critical personal and family health matters.

If an employee meets specific employment criteria, then that employee may be eligible for up to 12 weeks of FMLA per 52 week period to care for their own serious health condition, or a covered family member with a serious health condition, or for maternity or adoption bonding needs (available to men as well as women.) Leaves may be taken a few days at a time if necessary.

An employee is asked to give 30 days' notice of a family medical leave request, but if the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must give notice as soon as practical.

Employers may require the health care provider to confirm the medical condition of the patient. In cases where

the employee fails or refuses to return a medical certification without good cause, the leave may not be treated as FMLA and the absence may then count against the employee under the department's attendance policy.

The FMLA requires continuation of insurance benefits. The employer and employee must continue to pay premiums as though the employee had continued working for those 12 weeks. Employees are entitled to any new health plans or benefits that are implemented during FMLA leave.

An employer may deny reinstatement until a returning employee provides a fitness-for-duty medical slip. If an employee fails to return after an FMLA leave, the County may consider the employee as having resigned.

Please contact me at 723-2540 with any questions you may have or refer to the County's FMLA policy which you will find in your Grant County Employee Handbook.

WOOPS! Dawn wasn't being safe.

Recently I was loading some monstrous rocks into a trailer. My husband pointed out that I needed to use my knees and legs to lift to avoid hurting my back. I don't lift a lot so I was just doing what came natural to me without thinking about my safety. It wasn't any harder to lift safely. I just needed to think about what I was doing. This incident made me think about how I could pass on the reminder to my co-workers, thus I give you the following.

This year, as of May 31st, 76 work comp. injuries were reported to me. How can we prevent these injuries? One way is to remind ourselves to use proper body mechanics and call for assistance if an object is too heavy or awkward for 1 person to handle.

No matter how careful we are, injuries still occur and the County wants you to be cared for as quickly and efficiently as possible.

What if you feel a pop in your back or scratch your arm on a filing cabinet? You may think you will be fine so you don't report the accident right away. *Think again!* Many times accidents that aren't reported within 3 days end up needing medical attention but your health insurance won't pay the bill when they find out it was work related. Now it's hard to remember the injury details and the County's insurance company may delay payment of your claim because it takes longer to investigate the incident.

What's the bottom line? Be kind to your body and be sure to report every injury immediately to your supervisor. If they aren't available, contact Joyce or myself at 723-2540.